

DECISION 17/2025

OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF

THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY (EIT)

ON THE INITIAL ALLOCATION OF THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION
TO THE KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION COMMUNITIES (KICs)
FOR THE 2026-2028 BUSINESS PLANS OF THE
SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH AND FIFTH WAVE KICs,
TO CROSS-KIC ACTIVITIES
AND TO THE EIT HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVE

THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY,

HAVING REGARD to Regulation 2021/819 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (hereafter referred to as the “EIT Regulation”)¹, in particular to Article 18(7), Section 2(1)(c) and Section 3(5) of the Statutes annexed thereto;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 2021/820 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) 2021-2027: Boosting the Innovation Talent and Capacity of Europe (hereafter referred to as the “EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027”)², in particular to Sections 3.6.2-3.6.3 and 5.2.1 thereof;

HAVING REGARD to Regulation 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013³;

HAVING REGARD to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (hereinafter referred to as the “EU Financial Regulation”)⁴;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 21/2019 of the EIT Governing Board of the EIT of 25 September 2019 on the Financial Regulation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (hereinafter referred to as the “EIT Financial Regulation”)⁵, in particular Article 1 thereof;

HAVING REGARD to the Decision of the Governing Board of the EIT of 16 December 2009 on the selection and designation of KIC InnoEnergy, Climate KIC and EIT ICT Labs⁶;

¹ OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 61-90.

² OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 91-118.

³ OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1-68.

⁴ OJ L 2024/2509, 16.9.2024, p. 1

⁵ Ref. Ares(2019)6810859

⁶ Ref. Ares(2010) 130286-11/03/2010

HAVING REGARD to the Decision of the Governing Board of the EIT of 9 December 2014 on the designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) in the ‘Innovation for healthy living and active ageing’ theme and the: ‘Raw Materials sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution’ thematic area⁷;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 29/2016 of the Governing Board of the EIT on the designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) in the ‘Food for Future’ and ‘Added Value Manufacturing’ themes of 17 November 2016⁸;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 6/2018 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 2 March 2018 on the designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in the ‘innovation for healthy living and active ageing’ theme and on the rejection of other applicants in the 2014 call for KICs’ proposals⁹;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 36/2018 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 4 December 2018 on the designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Community in the ‘Urban Mobility’ thematic area¹⁰;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 37/2018 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 5 December 2018 on the designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Community in the ‘Manufacturing’ thematic area¹¹;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 14/2021 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 7 May 2021 on the principles for financing, monitoring and evaluating Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) activities¹²;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 21/2021 of the Governing Board of the EIT on the authorisation of the EIT Director to prepare, negotiate and conclude partnership agreements and grant agreements¹³;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 42/2021 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 23 November 2021 on the supervision framework of Knowledge and Innovation Communities (hereafter referred to as the “Supervision Framework of KICs”)¹⁴;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 06/2022 of the Governing Board of the EIT on the amendment of the principles on the financial sustainability of Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) and repealing decision 13/2021 of the Governing Board of the EIT¹⁵;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 18/2022 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 22 June 2022 on the selection and designation of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in the area of Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries¹⁶;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 38/2023 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 23 November 2023 on the continuation and scaling up of the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Innovation Capacity Building Initiative beyond its pilot phase¹⁷;

⁷ 02008.EIT.2014.I.EIT.GB

⁸ 05940.EIT.2016.I.GB42

⁹ 01148.EIT.2018.I.E1

¹⁰ Ref. Ares(2018)6260797

¹¹ Ref. Ares(2018)6261053

¹² Ref. Ares(2021)3111256

¹³ Ref. Ares(2021)3798804

¹⁴ Ref. Ares(2021)7384565

¹⁵ Ref. Ares(2022)2098580

¹⁶ Ref. Ares(2022)4608261

¹⁷ Ref. Ares(2023)8036119

HAVING REGARD to Decision 24/2024 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 28 June 2024 on the conclusion of the Memorandum of Cooperation with EIT Climate-KIC, EIT Digital and EIT InnoEnergy¹⁸;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 36/2024 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 17 December 2024 on the adoption of the Final Single Programming Document (2025-2027) of the EIT¹⁹;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 37/2024 of the EIT Governing Board on adopting the EIT Budget and Establishment Plan for the financial year 2025²⁰;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 1/2025 on the adoption of the Draft Single Programming Document (2026-2028) of the EIT²¹;

HAVING REGARD to Decision 8/2025 of the Governing Board of the EIT of 11 April 2025 on the principles for the determination of the EIT financial allocation to the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) for the 2026-2028 Business Plans of the second, third, fourth and fifth wave KICs, to Cross-KIC activities and to the EIT Higher Education Initiative²²;

HAVING REGARD to the Invitation to submit proposals for Grant Agreements covering KIC Business Plan activities 2026-2028, Cross-KIC activities 2026-2028 and EIT Higher Education Initiative activities 2026-2028 (hereafter referred to as the 'Invitation 2026-2028')²³;

WHEREAS

- (1) In line with the funding allocation principles laid down by Decision 8/2025 of the EIT Governing Board, the scope of the present decision covers the initial funding allocation for the EIT grants for the second, third, fourth, and fifth wave KICs' Business Plans, Cross-KIC and EIT Higher Education Initiative activities in the period of 2026-2028.
- (2) Grants for activities under the Memoranda of Cooperation (MoC) signed with the first wave KICs, grants to be awarded to EIT Water in 2026 and in 2027-2028, and grants awarded under Contribution Agreements signed by the European Commission and the EIT are not subject to this decision.
- (3) On 17 June 2025, the EIT launched its Invitation 2026-2028. Following the receipt of the proposals by the EIT on 3 September 2025 from the second, third, fourth, and fifth wave of KICs, the Cross-KIC consortia and the HEI consortium, independent external experts evaluated them in line with the criteria laid down in Decision 8/2025 of the EIT Governing Board. Additionally, the performance of KICs is measured by continuous monitoring in accordance with Article 18(7) of the EIT Regulation and as described in the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda 2021-2027.

¹⁸ Ref. Ares(2024)4696453

¹⁹ Ref. Ares(2024)9134718

²⁰ Ref. Ares(2024)9135012

²¹ Ref. Ares(2025)915544

²² Ref. Ares(2025)2983206

²³ Ref. Ares(2025)4822733, as amended by the EIT on 29 August 2025 (ref. Ares(2025)6999925).

- (4) By Article 2(3) of its Decision 8/2025, the EIT Governing Board has decided to apply more favourable funding conditions (i.e. funding rate up to 100%) for RIS, Cross-KIC, and the EIT Higher Education Initiative activities in 2026-2028.
- (5) In accordance with Article 4 of Decision 8/2025 of the EIT Governing Board, the Governing Board hereby decides on the initial multiannual funding allocation for the 2026-2028 period for grants to be awarded from the EIT Budget 2025 and 2026. Then, when the final EIT Budget is known for 2027 the EIT Governing Board may take an additional funding allocation decision to either finance additional activities within the same Grant Agreements or to identify and finance strategic initiatives, together with the European Commission. The additional funding allocation will take into account the available EIT budget, the ongoing multiannual legal commitments between the EIT and the KICs, the performance of the KICs and the estimated financial needs.
- (6) For some KICs, the EIT Governing Board hereby makes strategic recommendations and/or imposes conditions linked to the current funding allocation decision, in line with the Supervision Framework of KICs. The EIT Director will verify the fulfilment of these recommendations and conditions before the award of the grant.
- (7) In line with point 5 of Section 3 of the Statutes annexed to the EIT Regulation (recast), the agreement of the European Commission, expressed by its Representative in the Governing Board, is necessary for the adoption by the EIT Governing Board of Article 1-3 of the present decision. The Commission Representative's observations and opinion were shared before the voting by the EIT Governing Board at its meeting. Following the voting, the Commission, by way of its Representative, gave its agreement with the adoption of the aforementioned provisions of the present decision.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Initial financial allocation from the EIT KIC Fund 2026-2027
for the second, third, fourth and fifth wave KICs

The maximum EIT financial contribution, taking into consideration the maximum requested grant by each KIC, for the KIC Business Plans covering the period of 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028 shall be allocated as follows:

EIT Health:	EUR 67,263,754 (including the RIS activities)
EIT RawMaterials:	EUR 74,754,908 (including the RIS activities)
EIT Food:	EUR 125,269,969 (including the RIS activities)
EIT Urban Mobility:	EUR 206,871,498 (including the RIS activities)
EIT Manufacturing:	EUR 163,223,750 (including the RIS activities)
EIT Culture & Creativity:	EUR 131,616,129 (including the RIS activities)

Article 2

Initial financial allocation from the Cross-KIC Fund 2026-2027

Further to Article 8 of Decision 8/2025 of the EIT Governing Board and based on the proposals submitted by the Cross-KIC consortia, maximum **EUR 79,324,152** shall be available to KICs for Cross-KIC activities for the period of 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028.

Article 3

Initial financial allocation from the EIT Higher Education Initiative Fund 2026-2027

Further to Article 9 of Decision 8/2025 of the EIT Governing Board and based on the proposal submitted by the HEI consortium, maximum **EUR 129,999,002** shall be available to KICs for the EIT Higher Education Initiative from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028 in order to support the development of the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of Higher Education institutions.

Article 4

Award and implementation

- (1) Based on the submitted proposals for the different topics indicated in Invitation 2026-2028, the EIT Director shall award the 2026-2028 grants, subject to the fulfilment of specific conditions stipulated by the Governing Board. The EIT Director shall take a risk-based approach when awarding the grant to affected KICs.
- (2) The EIT Director shall be responsible for the implementation of this decision, including the communication of the strategic recommendations or any other specific conditions agreed by the Governing Board for each proposal to be addressed, and including the signature of the grant agreements.

Article 5

Conditionality upon the final adoption of the EIT budget

The financial allocation provided for in the present decision will be covered

- partly by the EIT's Budget and Establishment Plan 2025 (Decision 37/2024 of the EIT Governing Board), in accordance with the Annual Work Programme 2025, which is part of the EIT Single Programming Document 2025-2027, as Financing Decision; and
- partly by the EIT's Budget and Establishment Plan 2026, which is subject to the adoption by the EIT, the Annual Work Programme 2026 which is part of the EIT Single Programming Document 2026-2028, as Financing Decision, and the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2026, which will determine the amount of EU contribution to the EIT in 2026. In case of a reduction in the financial contribution available for grants in the final EIT Budget, the maximum EIT financial contribution to the proposals shall be amended proportionally.

Article 6
Entry into force

This decision shall enter into force on the day of its adoption.

Done in Budapest on 23 September 2025

(e-signed)
Stefan Dobrev
Chairperson of the EIT Governing Board